

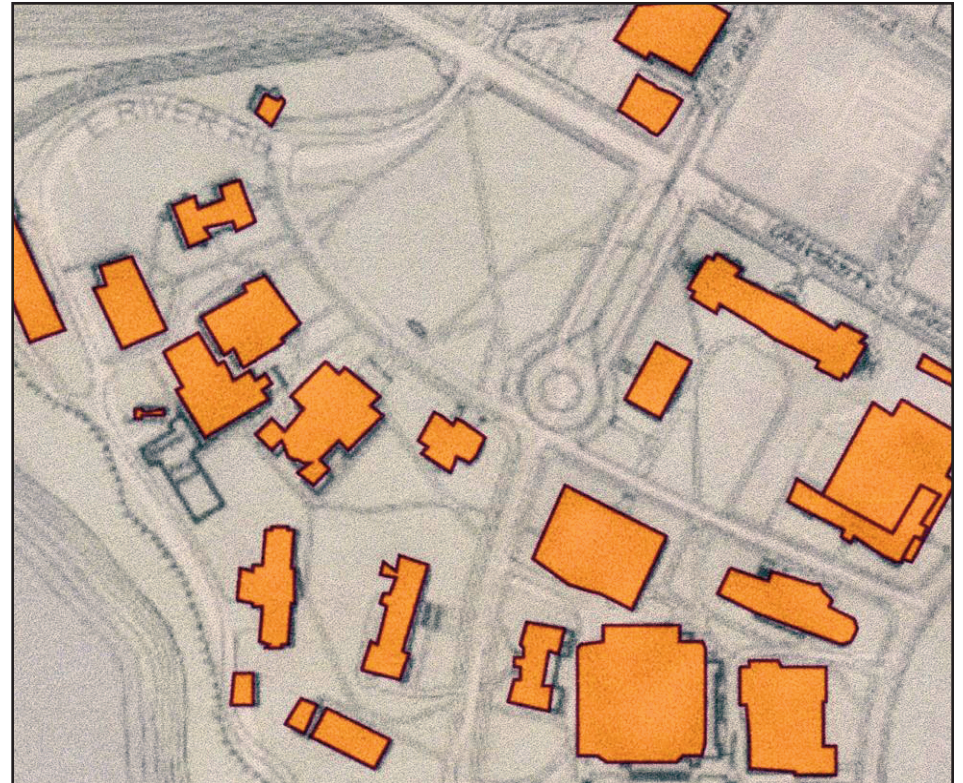
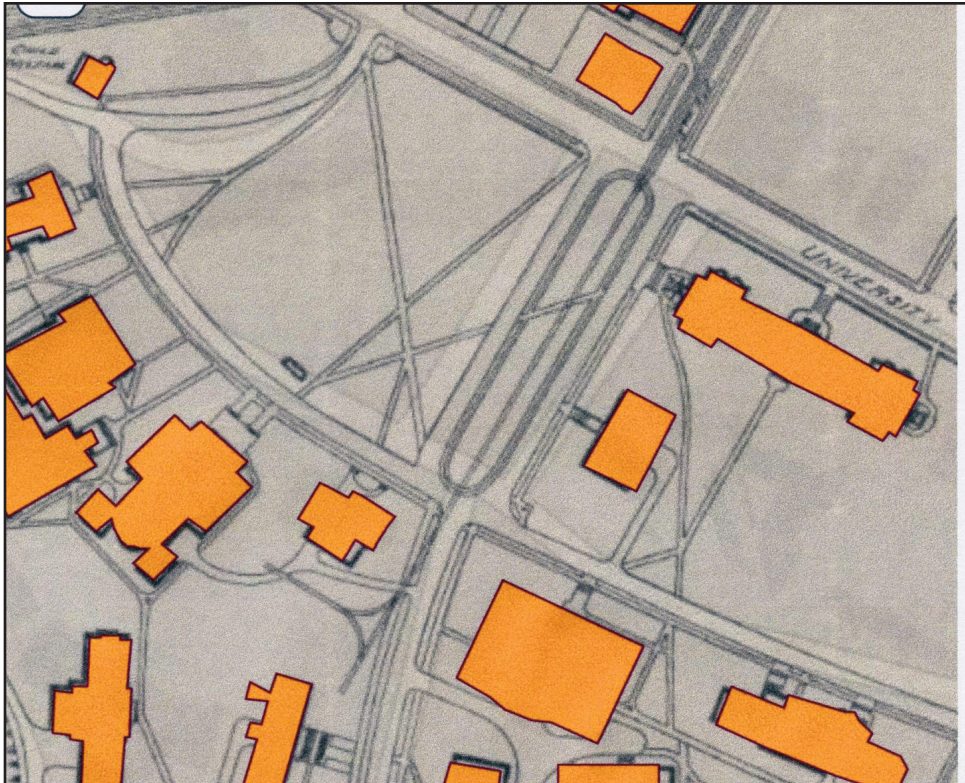




Left: A car departs the Minneapolis campus via the grassy median of 15th Avenue. Charles A. Brown photo.

Below left: Streetcars arriving at the Minneapolis campus originally turned on a wye behind an academic building. It was noisy, time-consuming and could delay double-headed departures.

Below right: That changed in 1936 with the installation of a turning loop.



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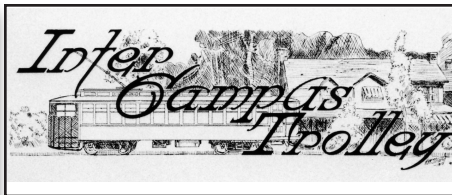
The Minnesota Streetcar Museum operates the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line in Minneapolis and the Excelsior Streetcar Line in Excelsior. Its mission is to preserve Minnesota's electric railway heritage.

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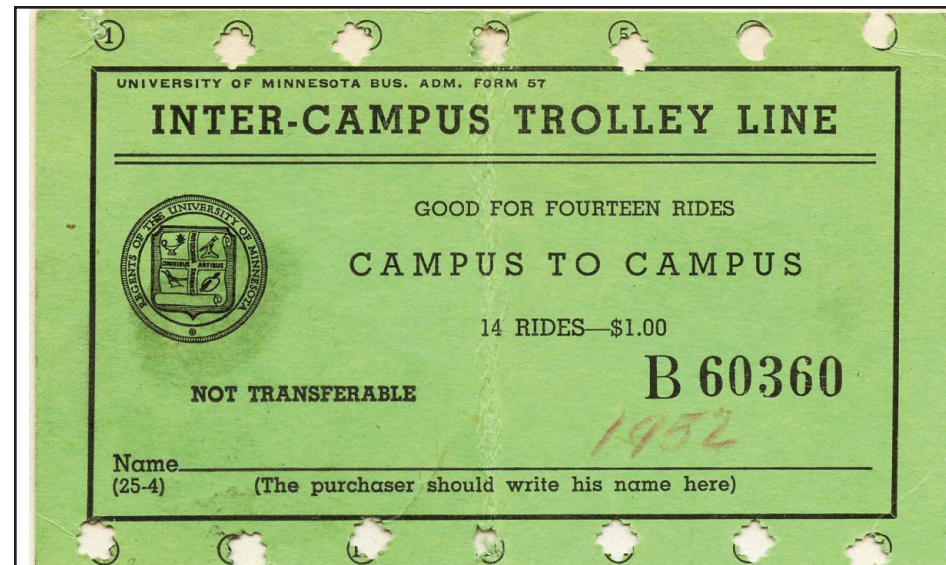
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Along with the Como-Harriet line, with which it shared track, the Inter-Campus line was the last to be abandoned in 1954. It was an unusual operation, owned by the University of Minnesota and run under contract by TCRT. Rather than writing a completely new text, this issue dips into other writings from when the Inter-Campus actually operated.

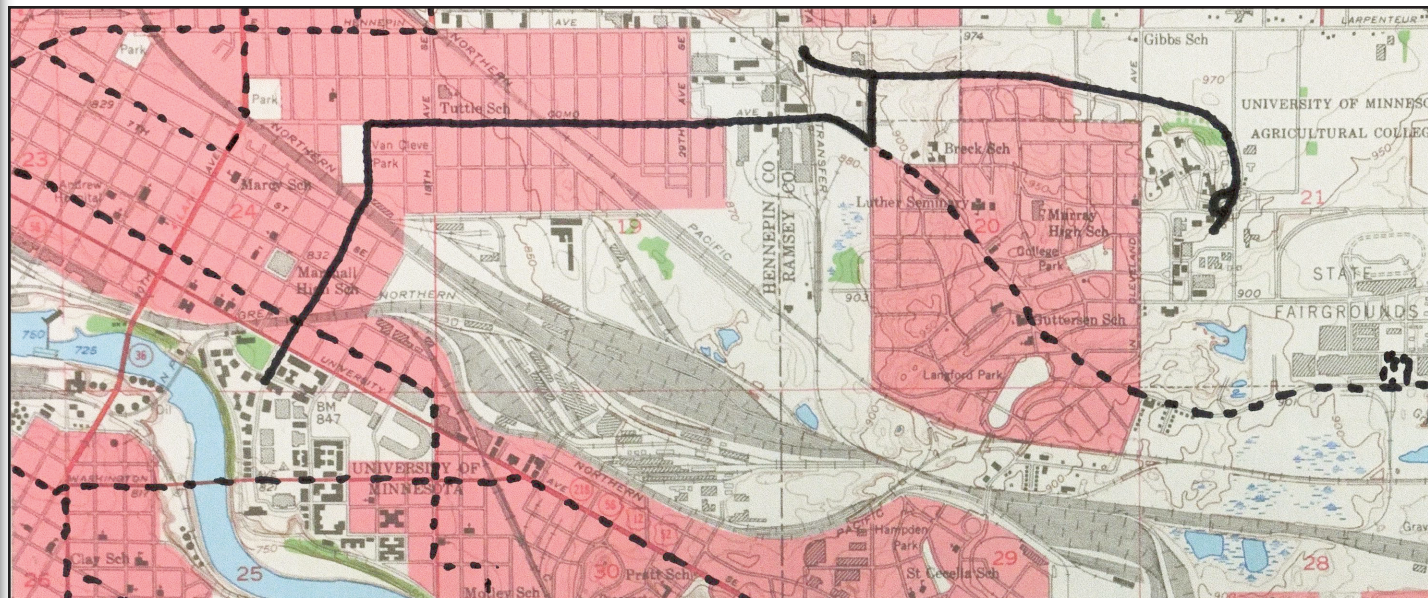
From the 1916 Minnesota Gopher yearbook

The advent of a street car line connecting the two campuses was not enthusiastically welcomed by many, whose aesthetic senses were offended by the idea of a commonplace street



car within the sacred bounds of our campus. The economic factor that produced it, however, is an undeniable justification of its existence. This factor was the excessive cost of transporta-

tion by team of all the coal and building materials that were needed by the Agricultural School, and a freight connection was the only solution of the problem of offsetting this waste. An



Front cover: This issue is devoted to the Inter-Campus line. One of the last to operate, it ran differently than anything else in the TCRT system. That included operating the last gate cars, such as #1266, seen at the St. Paul Campus loop. Sandy Goodrick photo
Top right: A student punch card. Above: The route of the Inter-Campus. Other streetcar lines are dashed on the map.

appropriation of sixty thousand dollars was asked for, and was granted by the state legislature of 1911, providing for a connection with the Street Railway Company's tracks for freight and passenger service. The desirability of passenger service was a second thought, but its good results have been obvious: the saving of time and money for the students who have classes on both campuses, the saving of money for the University which does not have to duplicate courses for the separate colleges now, and the closer union developed between the main campus and its agricultural mate.

The cars run into the campus on Fifteenth Avenue, and wye behind the Mechanic Arts Building. Attempts were made to obviate the necessity of thus cutting across the campus, but were without effect. The residents of 17th Avenue opposed the entrance of the cars on that street. It was then thought possible to turn on University Avenue and 15th Avenue, but this plan the city defeated. When the Street Railway Company refused to allow the turning to be made on its tracks on Fifteenth Avenue and 4th Street, the only possible solution was seen to be the one that was finally adopted.

So now, where once flowers bloomed gayly and green grass sprouted, a street car with Minnesota's seal on either side thunders along, an epitome of what happens often in the larger world beyond the college portals.

The first cars were operated in November, and in this month the revenue covered the operating expenses. Yet when the December receipts were known, it was discovered that over and above the operating expenses was a net surplus of over three hundred dollars. The Board of Regents then decided to reduce the fare from the



Entering St. Paul on Como Avenue, which it shared with the Como-Harriet line, the Inter-Campus passed under the Minnesota Transfer Railroad, then diverged onto its own rails alongside Eustis Street, seen in the foreground. Vernon Langdon photo.

Junction (Como and Eustis) to the University from three cents to two cents. From campus to campus the cash fare is five cents, but if tickets are bought, six rides may be had for twenty-five cents, or fifty rides for two dollars. The cars leave both ends simultaneously, the first car at seven-thirty in the morning and the last at five-thirty in the evening.

The Inter-Campus in 1941

As described by the U of M's Service Enterprises Department

The inter-campus car line was established in 1914 for the purpose of facilitating transportation between the Main campus and the Farm campus. Only students, faculty, and employees of the University are supposed to ride

this car. The reason which justified the establishment of this service was to eliminate the duplication of classes and faculty on the two campuses. The inter-campus car line makes it possible for students living on either campus to take classes on both campuses.

Students who have classes on both campuses are issued passes which permit them to ride free of charge. These passes are issued at the University



The Inter-Campus turned north along the west edge of Eustis Street, passing this waiting shelter and entering single track all the way to the St. Paul campus. This was also the wye for shortline Como-Harriet cars and became the end of the line in 1953 when the St. Paul portion of the line was abandoned.

Post Office on the Main campus and at the Registrar's office on the Farm campus. The students are required to present their fee statements to show that they do have classes on both campuses. Faculty members and employees who ride the car are sold tickets at the rate of 25 rides for \$1.00. These tickets are sold at the Bursar's office. The conductor on each car keeps a daily record of the number of passengers who have passes, the number who have tickets, and the number who pay cash or token fares on each trip, and these records are submitted as reports to the office of the Service Enterprises. These reports show that during the past year there were 690,000 individual trips taken on this line, which is an average of 2413 passengers a day.

The first car leaves the Main campus at 7:20 and the Farm campus at 7:35 in the morning, and the last car leaves the Main campus at 6:10 and the Farm campus at 6:25 in the evening, on five days of the week during the fall, winter and spring quarters. A car arrives at each campus every 15 minutes, and one leaves every 15 minutes on those days. Cars run on the regular morning schedule on Saturday mornings during this time. On Saturday afternoons, the days during the Christmas and spring vacations, and during the sum-



The tracks turned east from Eustis Street into the ravine headed uphill. Looking west, the freight interchange to the Minnesota Transfer Railway goes straight ahead. Note the STOP targets.



Above: An eastbound car leaves the grassy median at University Avenue. In the distance a Como-Harriet car turns from 4th Street onto 15th Avenue. Dick Lukin photo. Below: This photo shows the spur track into the U's physical plant building. It's not clear why passengers are boarding one block from the end of the line. Minneapolis Public Works collection.



Above left: A streetcar loops into the Minneapolis campus stop. University of Minnesota Archives.

Left: A student fare IOU.

University of Minnesota
Comptroller Form 332
9-42-5000

INTER-CAMPUS CAR

Date Dec. 7, 1945

Inasmuch as I do not have cash, token or ticket with me for my transportation on the Inter-Campus Car I request that 10 cents be deducted from my general deposit.

Signed C. J. Sulzback P. O. Box 347

College Engineering Year 1946

mer, only one car is used, and it runs on a half-hour schedule. The schedule for this service was drawn up in the office of the Director of Service Enterprises, and it has been arranged to integrate the class schedules on the two campuses so that students who have classes on both campuses lose the minimum of time in going back and forth. The present schedule has been found satisfactory, and only a very few minor changes have been made over a period of several years.

There is no service on Sundays, none on the Saturdays during July and August, and none on Election Day, Armistice Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Lincoln's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, and Independence Day. Extra cars are put into service for the rush hours during the school year. A double header is put into service for the 10:10 and 11:10 classes. Special cars are run for the Christmas and Recognition Assemblies, and such special service is provided for any other evening functions if the department wanting the service is willing to pay the expense incurred.

The operating cost is approximately \$22,750.00 per year for the passenger service. The University pays the Minneapolis Street Railway Company \$2.59 per day for rent on each car used, and \$3.30 an hour for the service for each car. The latter figure is to cover the cost of labor and power used. Time for which service is paid is counted from the time each car leaves the East Minneapolis Station until the car is back in the barn.

The income from the passenger service is about \$5570.00 per year. Earnings from tokens and cash amounting to about \$1300 a year are collected and accredited to the



Above and below left: The intersection of 15th Avenue SE and 4th Street in Dinkytown is elevated over the railroad tracks leading to the Stone Arch Bridge. This is where the Inter-Campus crossed the Oak-Harriet line and joined the Como-Harriet line as far as Eustis Street in St. Paul. Above: Ed Nelson photo.

Below right: 15th Avenue passed under the Great Northern's freight bypass of downtown and angled north toward Como Avenue. Ed Nelson photo.





We follow the line down Como Avenue.

Above: Turning from 15th Avenue onto Como. In the foreground is part of the wye that was unused in later years.

Below: Temporary student housing was erected on University land along Como at 29th Avenue. Inter-Campus cars stopped here.



Above: At 22nd Avenue SE, the tracks passed under the Northern Pacific's B Line, today the BNSF's main line through the Twin Cities.

Below: The camera looks west at an Inter-Campus car about to pass under the Minnesota Transfer. Today this is where Highway 280 crosses over Como Avenue.





Above: Turning from Eustis Street onto Como. John Stern photo, ERA collection.
Below: A Minnesota Railfans Association turns east across Eustis. The freight interchange is at right. Jim Kreuzberger photo.



CARS LEAVING MPLS. CAMPUS				CARS LEAVING ST. PAUL CAMPUS			
7:00	10:00	1:00	4:00	7:25	10:25	1:25	4:25
7:25	10:25	1:25	4:25	7:40	10:40	1:40	4:40
7:40	10:40	1:40	4:40	8:00	11:00	2:00	5:10
8:00	11:00	2:00	5:10	8:25	11:25	2:25	5:30
8:25	11:25	2:25	5:30	8:40	11:40	2:40	5:50
8:40	11:40	2:40	5:50	9:00	12:00	3:00	6:10
9:00	12:00	3:00	6:10	9:25	12:25	3:25	6:30
9:25	12:25	3:25	6:30	9:40	12:40	3:40	6:50
9:40	12:40	3:40	6:50	10:00	1:00	4:00	7:00

HALF-HOUR SCHEDULE SATURDAY AFTERNOON, BEGINNING, MPLS. CAMPUS 12:00-LAST CAR 6:55-ST. PAUL CAMPUS 1:00-LAST CAR 7:10

NO CARS ON SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

CHRISTMAS & SPRING VACATIONS AND SUMMER SCHEDULES TO BE ANNOUNCED.

PASSENGERS WILL BE PICKED UP AT THE FOLLOWING STOPS ONLY:
216 St. Ann 15th Ave. From 15th Ave. From 15th Ave. From 15th Ave.

Above: The posted schedule at the University Grove stop.
Below: A stairway descended from the corner of Fullham Street and Folwell Avenue to reach the University Grove stop, serving faculty housing. Both Art Rusterholz photos.





Above: The line passed under Cleveland Avenue.

Below: Boxcars with supplies for the campus were spotted on this spur track next to the livestock barns. Ed Nelson photo.



In this aerial view of the St. Paul Campus, the streetcar line runs next to Gortner Street at extreme left, then into the turning loop next to a greenhouse where streetcars loaded and unloaded. The spur track to the power plant (note the smokestack) split from the left side of the loop. Star-Tribune photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection.



University account with the streetcar company. The sale of tickets at the Bursar's office amounts to about \$4200.00, and about \$70.00 is collected from the student deposits at the Registrar's Office for charge slips given by students who have neither a pass or cash with them at the time they ride the car.

During the past two years a switch car has been used to haul coal to the heating plant on the Farm Campus. The University owns the switch car and pays the salary of the one man required to operate it. The Minneapolis Street Railway Company charges the University \$1.04 an hour for the power used for its operation. The cost of operating the car has been about \$1,000.00 a year. The rate charged for hauling on the switch car is 30 cents a ton, and about 50 tons of coal can be hauled at a load. The yearly income (presumably an internal payment from the St. Paul campus power plant) from the switch car is about \$3500.00. Occasionally other bulk sup-

Scenes at the St. Paul campus. Above: Two views of the stop on the loop. Car 1148 is one of the former Lake Minnetonka high speed cars.

Below: The power plant, destination for loaded coal cars. Ed Nelson photo.



plies are hauled on this car, but its operation is primarily for hauling coal.

From Interurbans 14, the first history of TCRT, published in 1953

The University of Minnesota's main campus is located in Minneapolis, but the U's Agricultural School is located in St. Paul. The Intercampus Line was constructed in 1913-14 to provide quick, efficient transportation between the two, thus obviating the necessity of duplicating courses and facilities.

The resultant electric railway operation resulted in one of America's most colorful lines. 2400 students daily ride its cars, which operate on a fifteen-minute headway in school hours; on Saturday the headway is 15 minutes in the morning, 30 minutes in the afternoon---while the line shuts down completely nights and Sundays.

The Intercampus Line is economical, too: 4¢ per ride by the dollar commutation ticket, 7.5¢ by token, or 10¢ cash. Should a student find himself unable to pay even these modest fares, the conductor obligingly hands him an "IOU" slip to fill out; the slip eventually finds its way to the University bursar's office and 10¢ is taken from the student's account to satisfy the conductor's lien. A student carrying quite heavy "Ag" units is even allowed to ride free of charge.

The Intercampus Line is a curious hybrid: half TCRT, half state-owned. TCRT's Como-Harriet line is used from the Main Campus at 4th St. SE & 15th Ave. SE via 15th Ave. and Como Ave. to the Campus Junction at Eustis. Here the Intercampus cars switch onto State owned railway, single track on private way. Through oak woods and pleasant countryside the college special wends its way, finally reaching its destination---the loop at the Farm School, just 2.5 miles from its starting point.



Top left: The Intercampus hauled freight from the Minnesota Transfer Railway interchange (seen here) to the St. Paul campus. Loads included coal for the campus power plant and general supplies. The interchange had a runaround track (see page 21). The switch car pushed freight cars up the hill and led them returning to the interchange. Norm Podas photo.



Bottom left: Pushing a boxcar up the ravine east of Eustis Street. University of Minnesota Archives

Top and bottom right: This being the farm campus, there were animals.



The cars required for this service are rented from TCRT by the University at a rate of (1943) \$2.50 per day per car, plus \$3.70 per hour for labor and power. In addition, TCRT performs all maintenance of roadway for which it is reimbursed.

However, the University does own one piece of rolling stock: the switching car. This car was built by TCRT for the University on November 15, 1914. It is half-closed and half-open, and occasionally hauls a passenger or two as well as freight cars and l-c-1 (less than carload) freight. #1 isn't much to look at, but does its job well---the job consisting in the main of shifting coal, fertilizer, machinery and livestock between the Minnesota Transfer Railway interchange and the Farm School. Occasionally #1 gets outside the Agricultural College bounds when it is called upon to haul supplies from the University's Main Campus storehouse on 15th Avenue SE between University Avenue and 4th Street; this is the only time it is seen on the opposite end of the line.

The University's engineering students surveyed the route of the line in 1913 and contractors finished the construction and 'grading work by the end of that year. Tracks were laid by TCRT and regular service was begun on Wednesday, November 4, 1914.

Although primarily for students, anyone can ride the Intercampus Line by paying a separate cash or token fare; transfers are neither issued nor received by the line.

Skipper Spencer

—Aaron Isaacs

Thousands of motormen and conductors worked for TCRT over the years. Almost all of them remain anonymous to us. They were hired and did the job, barely leaving behind any information about them. A major exception was Stephen Spencer, conductor 244. He was hired in 1909 and worked 35 years. He never got the chance to retire, becoming ill in 1943. He passed away six months later at the too early age of 56.

Spencer was probably the best known trainman in TCRT history. Starting in 1927, he became a fixture on the Inter-Campus Line. But there was more to him than being a regular presence. It appears that Spencer had a photographic memory. He was well read and intellectually curious. He loved being around the University and interacting with the students and faculty. He even lived near the campus, at 15th Ave. SE and Rollins. From there it was a short streetcar ride to work at East Side Station.

He became known for learning the names of all the student riders and what they were studying. He would hold detailed discussions with students and faculty on a wide variety of subjects. He became the campus checkers champion, once taking on 12 opponents simultaneously and beating them all. He was Santa Claus at the annual campus Christmas party. To everyone he was known as "Skipper" Spencer.

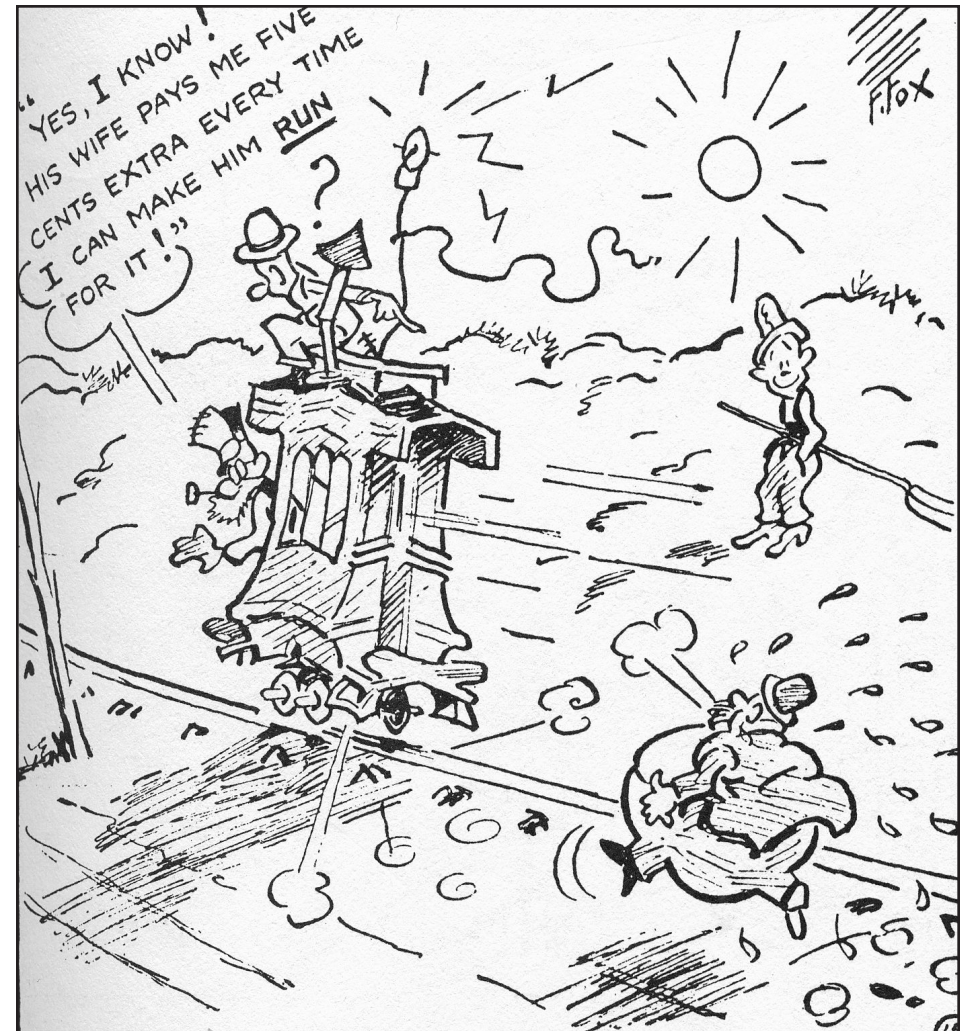
The "Skipper" nickname derives from the popular Toonerville Trolley comic strip. Its principal character was the irascible Skipper, in charge of the rickety trolley that ran through a bucolic rural landscape and "met all the trains" at Toonerville Junction.

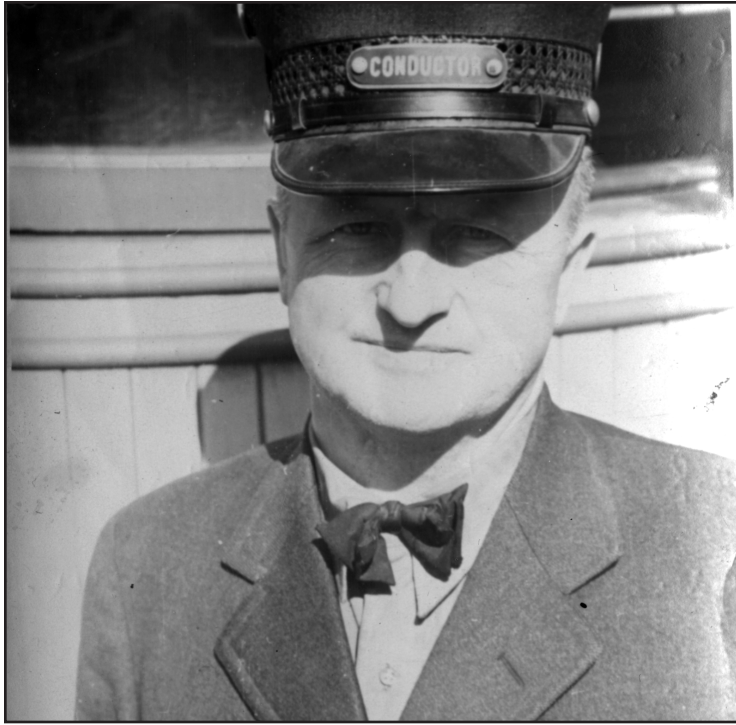


Spencer on duty. Why did they call him "Skipper"? The 1920s, 30s and 40s were the heyday of the Toonerville Trolley comic strip. The irascible Skipper piloted his decrepit trolley to Toonerville Junction, where it met all the trains.

The unusual operating characteristics of the Inter-Campus Line played a part in this story. It was owned by the U of M. TCRT ran it under contract. There were no free transfers to other streetcar lines. The cash fare was originally 5 cents, later increased to 10 cents. Most students paid their fare with a multi-ride ticket that lowered the fare to 4 cents and was punched by the conductor. The streetcars had no fareboxes, universal elsewhere on

TCRT starting about 1920. On the Inter-Campus fares were collected the old fashioned way. Passengers boarded and took their seat. Then the conductor walked up and down the aisle punching tickets and collecting cash fares by hand, then ringing them up on the fare register mounted on a pole at the rear of the passenger compartment. Beginning in the 1930s, only Inter-Campus cars still had fare registers and no fare boxes.





Skipper if he would please come to the dance in Oli's Nite Club, otherwise known as the University farm gym Friday, and be Oli, the head waiter. His last words to the committee were, "Next thing I know, you kids on the farm campus will be wanting me to be Santa Claus and I suppose I'd say 'yes' again."

Minnesota Daily 4-21-34

Versatile Skipper Spencer,

If a student didn't have cash or a ticket to pay the fare, the conductor filled out an IOU ticket, which was submitted to the University Bursar's office for payment. This face to face contact, combined with the students and faculty riding multiple times a week according to their class schedules, created the perfect atmosphere for socializing.

Such was his notoriety that Spencer appeared repeatedly in the U of M and Minneapolis newspapers. Overall, he appeared in the Minnesota Daily 85 times, the Gopher Yearbook three times and the Minneapolis papers seven times. Here is a sample of the coverage.

Minnesota Daily 12-8-33

A committee of two young ladies representing the farm campus YWCA boarded his streetcar and asked

chief maestro of the transportation line running between the main and farm campuses, is not a man to be kept out of the news. After gaining recognition at the agricultural students banquet as a possible director of Shakespeare readings during his hourly trips, the energetic conductor popped up yesterday with a challenge to take on the winner of the farm campus checker tournament. Hearing of the contest, the skipper bemoaned his non-student status so mournfully that the Union board gave him permission to meet the final winner of the checker contest. Immediately after getting permission, Mr. Spencer issued the following statement, "I have started on the comeback trail after dropping that match to the main campus champion, Goldman, last fall. I think the checkers were loaded anyway. After disposing of these upstarts I'm coming back to beat

the main campus champ."

The campus population rose up in protest when the Skipper was bumped from his run by a conductor with more seniority. Here's how it played out.

Minnesota Daily 12-14-34

Skipper Spencer, leading exponent of the double wing back in checkers and confidant of thousands of University students, will give up the major part of his intercampus trolley run the first of the year, student passengers learned yesterday.

For seven years Skipper has been chief conductor of the intercampus special, "old 1149", and for 19 years before that, he had been conductor on other Minneapolis lines. In January another conductor will take over Skipper's car from 7:30 am to 3:00pm, leaving the campus favorite only a two-hour run late in the afternoon.

"It isn't a matter of choice," mourned the Skipper yesterday to sympathetic students. "Somebody else wants this run, and since he's been

with the company for 30 years, I have to recognize his seniority. I don't blame him. It's a wonderful run, this intercampus line."

"Yes, I'm old as a graveyard but this other man, he's older than two of them so he gets the job", said Skipper as he patiently waited for two late students to board the car. Skipper has seen thousands of students come and go and knows most of them by name. He's acted as counsellor and advisor to many a homesick student.

Minnesota Daily 12-15-34

Editorials don't really belong on the front page, but when something like this comes up—well, people ought to know about it. That's the way we feel about the possibility of losing Skipper Spencer. Not that anybody else can't collect fares and yank the bell rope just as effectively as Skipper; that isn't why Skipper is what he is. Skipper, to be very plain about it, is a philosopher. Skipper has a manner of thought and a gift of imparting it to his student friends that only a few choice profes-



Cond. _____ Cond. No. _____ Run No. _____

[illegible]

sors attain. Skipper, as a matter of fact, is ex-officio a member of the University faculty and naturally we sort of resent having him abruptly sent away. Skipper has taken root here and his personality has steadily borne fruit for years (besides, he plays a mean game of checkers). We urge you to send your protests to the street car company. Maybe we can keep him.

If Santa Claus wants to please some 14,000 University of Minnesota students and faculty members, he'll see that Stephen Spencer, veteran skipper of the inter-campus streetcar, remains on that line. This appeared today as petitions being circulated about the campus gained new signatures of persons anxious that Spencer be permitted to keep his run.

Streetcar officials explained today that employees select their own runs with seniority governing the choice. An older employee than Spencer chose the inter-campus line and for that reason Spencer must be shifted, they said. Spencer will still be on the inter-campus car on the late afternoon shift, but his regular run will be on the Como-Harriet and

Minnesota Daily 1-12-35

The Skipper, his conductor's hat pushed back on his forehead, walked briskly into The Daily office yesterday with the purpose in mind of thanking, through The Daily, all the professors and friends who helped him retain his old job.

It was just before Christmas that the news of his impending transfer leaked out and caused consternation among his admirers and sympathizers. They immediately got to work and their efforts bore such fruit that the philosopher's job was saved.

After the effort to keep Skipper had started, the matter came to the attention of the resident of the Rapid Transit company. In a letter to an interested University man, the president, T. Julian McGill wrote, "We have asked our Operating

Department to give this matter their best consideration. Shortly thereafter the decision was made. The older man about to replace him, replaced instead another man.

"I don't know what I would do if I should have to leave all my friends among the students", Skipper said. "In fact, I think if Al Capone spent a week on my run he

Minneapolis Journal 3-3-35

S. W. "Skipper" Spencer, boss of the inter-campus streetcar operating to University Farms, went to the annual Dairy Dance at the farm school gymnasium and won the ice cream eating contest, annual feature of the event. Spencer consumed two and three-fifths quarts of ice cream to beat Lloyd Knight, the defending champion. "Skipper" was awarded a one-gallon ice cream can as a trophy, and he carried it with him on his streetcar Saturday.

Minnesota Daily 4-21-36

Skipper Spencer, versatile campus trolley man, had his day last week when he managed to eke out one win and two draws in a series of checker games with J. B. Stiles, eighth ranking player in the world and seven times northwest checkers champion. Skipper, has been beaten by a student only once in 9 years.

Minnesota Daily 12-2-36

Just ten years ago Skipper Spencer made his first trip on the inter-campus trolley. "The students were so nice to me that day", says the Skipper. "I'll never forget it. Right then I swore by all the Chinese and Norwegian gods that I would get that run. I went to the foreman Bill Johnson and asked him if I could swap runs with the man that was on. He didn't like the run very well. Bill told me it was against the rule to swap runs. But I got it later. I started regular in June.

"Skip" is very happy on the University car line. He likes the young people and they like him. "Let a hundred people get off this car and I can call 98 of them by name," is his boast and he makes it good by saying good

Boogie Beaters and Skipper Spencer in Training



Being a conductor, Spencer was invited to conduct a campus jazz combo in this newspaper photo.

night as they leave the car.

"I love this run", he tells people. "I won't ever leave it. I could have got it in 1914 when they began the line if I had my eyes open. But I was on the Bryn Mawr line then. I knew a lot of the people out there and I hated to leave them, but over here all the people are educated and being with educated people polishes these old brass buttons."

The Skipper makes 15 trips between the campuses during his 8 hour day. "We used to have a 9 hour day and make 17 trips before the NRA. Now we have an 8 hour day and another hour to play checkers or read Shakespeare. That's why I'm for Roosevelt."

Gopher Yearbook 1936

A beard growing contest was another

of the features of the Homecoming celebration. Skipper Spencer was one of the judges.

Minneapolis Star 1-27-37

Pro Stan Larson has been trying to get "Skipper" Spencer, the inter-campus trolley car conductor, to visit the stadium gold gym for a few lessons. "Not me for that sissy golf game", ridicules the "Skipper". "Get a checker board up there and I might come around."

Minneapolis Star 3-30-37

Willie Ryan, world's professional checker champion, will match moves with S. W. Spencer, skipper of the intercampus streetcar, in a checker contest in the Minnesota Union ballroom on the campus.

Minneapolis Journal 3-30-37

Willie Ryan of New York, one of the outstanding checker players in the country, will take part in a blindfolded match against 16 opponents at the University of Minnesota tomorrow afternoon. Skipper Spencer, Gopher titleholder, will be among the contestants.

Minneapolis Star 5-7-37

Dr. L. J. Cooke again threw a strike to start Minnesota's 1937 baseball season, which may or may not account for the Gophers' double victory Saturday. "Skipper" Spencer, acting as batsman in the opening game ceremony, managed to hit Dr. Cooke's delivery, but fast fielding by Fred "Dad" Healy, stadium janitor and acting umpire, put out the "Skipper" before he reached first base.

Minneapolis Times-Tribune 12-24-40

No Christmas party at the University of Minnesota is complete without the appearance of S. W. (Skipper) Spencer, conductor of the inter-campus special. Skipper, perennial Santa Claus, arrived just in time to begin passing out gifts before donning his Santa outfit.

Minneapolis Star 2-21-41

Chaperones for the University of Minnesota Common Peepuls Ball to be held Saturday evening at Coffman Memorial Union will include... Governor Harold E. Stassen and members of the board of regents. Special patrons will be ...Herman Glander, the campus cop, and Stephen Spencer, skipper of the intercampus streetcar.

In 2013 the Minnesota Alumni Association magazine ran an article of former students' recollections of the Inter-Campus streetcar. Several

remembered Spencer.

"The most interesting person on the trolley was its conductor. Skipper Spencer had an eidetic (photographic) memory. No passenger's name was ever forgotten even with years of time between trips. His favorite activity after collecting fares was to engage the professors in a dialogue. His memory allowed him to be versed on all subjects so he more that held his own.

"The fellow who was the conductor knew everyone's name. How he could remember all the names of all the students is so remarkable."

"As Skip punched our tickets, he also learned and memorized our names. It wasn't long after the fall quarter began that Skip was welcoming each passenger by name. During the trip he often talked with students learning of their experiences on campus. Skip was a checker champion at the University and once played 12 games against 12 students at a time at Coffman Union and won all 12. Skip was a legend and friend to all students."

"For teenagers it was a fun ride, horsing around and hassling Skipper, the long-suffering conductor. Skipper had a hand punch with a specially shaped die to cancel rides on a pass card. We would cleverly retrieve the chad from the card and insert it in the punched hole, thereby garnering a free ride. Of course Skipper knew very well what we were doing and usually chewed us out but occasionally let us think we'd put one over on him."

Spencer died at age 56 of a heart ailment. Here is his obituary.

Star-Tribune 9-23-43

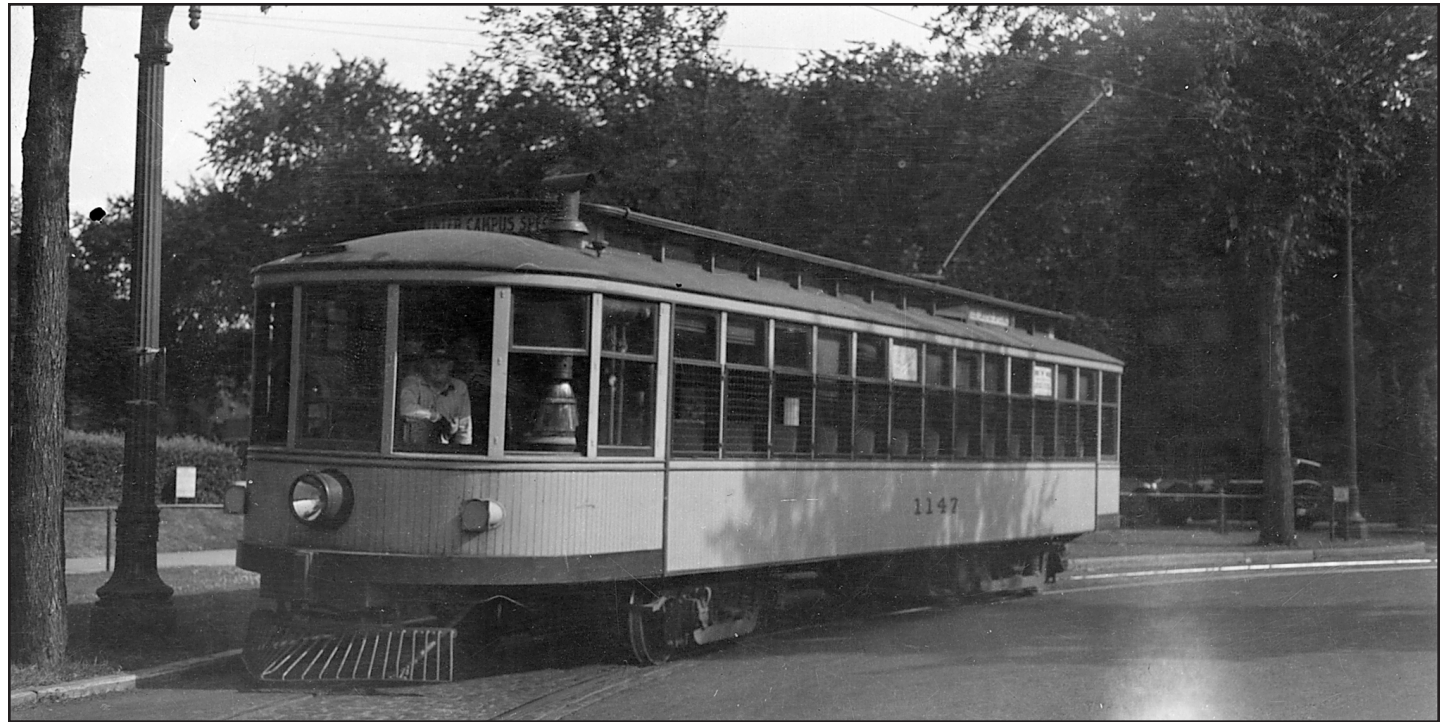
"He had been ill since May, and during that time had received presents and letters from former students in all parts of the world, many of them in the service. On the campus he was known as a "trolley philosopher" and often bested students in their pet subjects. Many of the trips from main campus to the University farm school turned into "bull sessions" with Skipper in the center of heated arguments. He knows practically all of his regular riders by their first names, and in many cases knew what subjects they were taking and marks they received. He had been a conductor 35 years." He is buried at Lakewood Cemetery.

Inter-Campus car assignments

From Ed Nelson's car assignment notes

Cars assigned to this service are kept in their own pool. Unlike the rest of the system after the 1930s, fare registers were retained, but there were no fareboxes. Fares were collected the old fashioned way. Passengers boarded and took their seats, then the conductor walked up and down the aisle collecting cash fares and punching multi-ride tickets.

In 1935, after abandonment of the Lake Minnetonka lines, high-speed suburban cars 1145-1149 were used; these (except 1145) were rebuilt in 1938 with front-exit doors, slower motors and K-type controllers. 1146-1149 were scrapped in 1941, and gate cars 1345-1349 succeeded to the Intercampus Line. In 1947 cars 1266-1271 were assigned and by 1953 were the only gate cars still in passenger service,



Above and below right: The last high speed cars in service were #1145-1149 on the Inter-Campus from 1935 to 1941, seen at the Minneapolis loop and approaching Cleveland Avenue. Above: Herman Rinke photo.

Below: Inside Car 1302 in 1954. Note that it has a fare register, but no farebox, which only happened on the Inter-Campus. Bob Schumacher photo.



being used only on this line. That longevity made it possible for car 1267 to be preserved by Seashore Trolley Museum. In 1954 car 1300 ran on the Inter-Campus, and that's why it has a fare register today. Here's the detailed chronology.

11-4-1914 Opened with 1321-22,24-27.

1-1-1916 1327-28,31-34.

1914-1919 Six cars from the 1321-34 group.

April 1919 1079-84.

September 1920 1080-84.

5-30-1923 1185-92

1-3-1927 1153, 1154, 1158, 1161 used on Lake Minnetonka Div. and Inter-Campus.

12-31-1928 1185-92; also used on St. Louis Park line.

About 1930 Mostly slow Lake Minnetonka Div. cars.

8-11-1932 1146-49 became the regular cars with 1160 and 1265 as spares.

1160 and 1265 were removed from service in 1935.

October 1941 1345-48 became the regular cars when 1146-49 were scrapped.

WWII 1329, 1330 added.

1947-1953: 1266-69 were the regular cars. 1948: 1330 damaged in accident on the I-C line and scrapped in April

April 1948 1266-69, 1329, 1345-48 as needed.

December 1949 1329 transferred to Lake St. 1270-71 added on I-C line.

Early winter 1951 1266-71

Late 1953 1301-04 regular cars

1954 1300-04 and 1269.

Miscellaneous Inter-Campus facts

Originally the Minneapolis end of the line was a wye, one block beyond the later loop at Folwell Hall (see inside front cover maps). Located

among the academic buildings, it was a noisy distraction and an operational bottleneck during multi-car movements. Finally in 1932 the wye was replaced by a loop in a reconfigured traffic circle at the corner of 15th Avenue and Pillsbury Drive. Here's an excerpt from the newspaper story.

"No more will students in the University of Minnesota business school have to halt their work while the inter-campus streetcar screeches around the wye behind the building and starts noisily on its return trip to the farm campus."

Intermediate stops were made between the campuses at Cleveland Avenue, Coffman Street (we think), the University Grove (steps descending from the end of Fulham Street), Como & 29th Avenue, Como & 18th Avenue, Como & 15th Avenue and 15th Avenue SE & 4th Street. The Como & 29th stop may have only appeared after World War II when student housing for returning soldiers was constructed on U of M land.

Here's a mystery. How did streetcars deadhead between East Side Station and the Minneapolis campus? We know that the first morning trip started at the Minneapolis campus. Extra cars assigned for double headers and special movements also entered and left service there. However, there was no direct track connection from the deadhead route on 4th Street SE to the Inter-Campus tracks on 15th Avenue that would permit a forward move into the Minneapolis campus (see map). For that matter, there was also no direct route from the campus to East Side. Here we speculate on two ways to do the pullout move.

1. Continue on 4th Street to Oak Street and turn on the wye at Oak and



Beacon. Return to Dinkytown and back around the corner into westbound 15th Avenue, then pull forward into the campus.

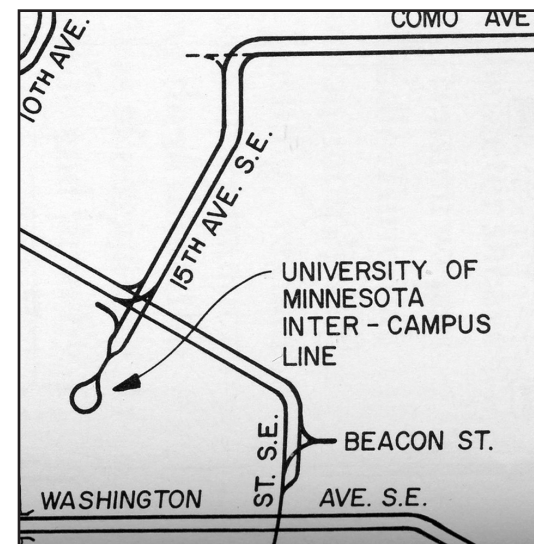
2. Turn left from 4th Street SE onto 15th Avenue. Back the two blocks into the campus loop. Manually turn the spring switch at the entrance to the campus loop to permit entering the loop counter-clockwise.

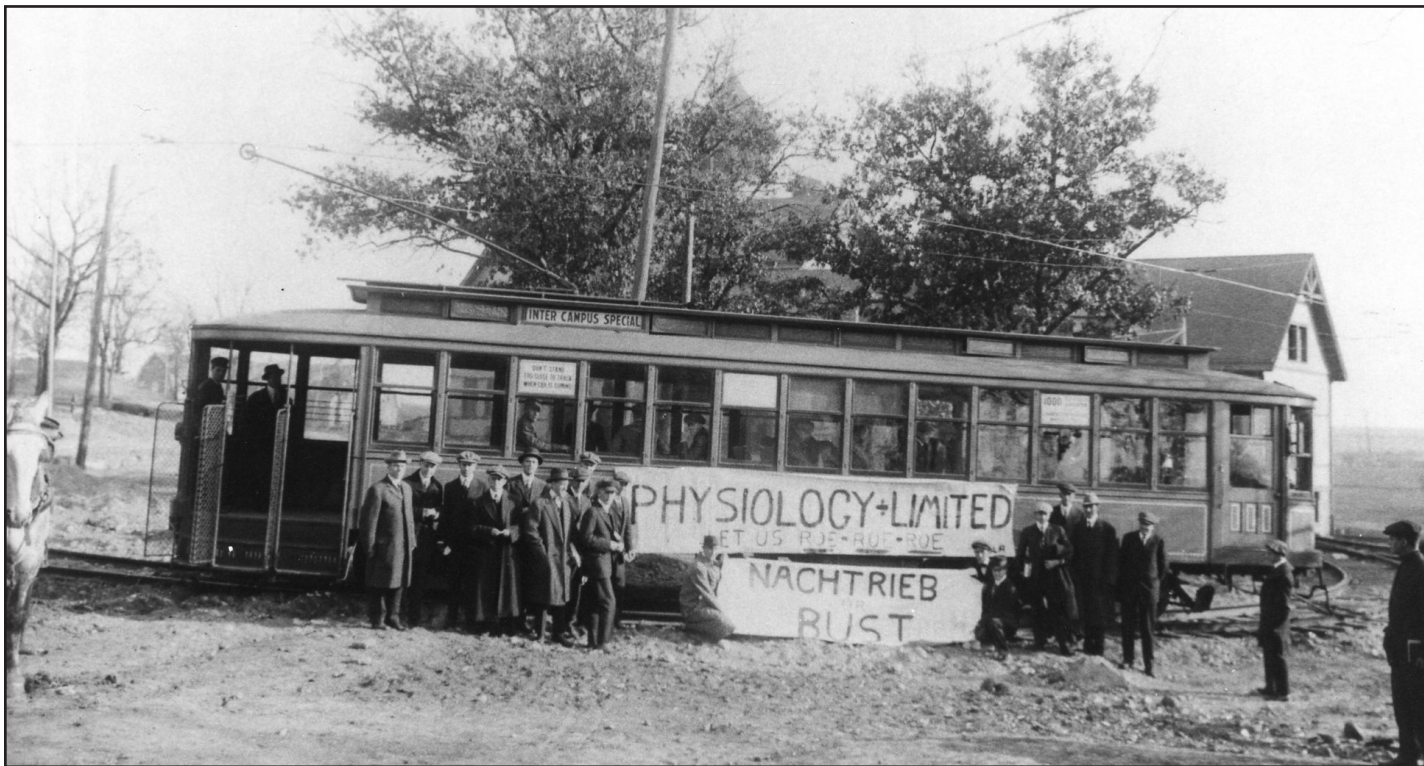
The pullin move to East Side Station from the Minneapolis campus would have been equally challenging. Here are two ways it could have been done.

1. Travel all the way to Como and Eustis, turn on the wye there, then pull in to East Side.

2. At the intersection of 15th Avenue and 4th Street, back around the corner onto the Oak-Harriet line, travel to Oak and Beacon, turn on that wye, then return to East Side Station.

Above: A PCC car only visited the Inter-Campus line once, during this Minnesota Railfans Association charter.
Below: The 15th Avenue & 4th Street intersection had no direct track connection to the Minneapolis campus.





Top left: Students celebrated the 1914 opening of the line at the St. Paul campus. University of Minnesota Archives.

Bottom left: Car 1345 was assigned to the Inter-Campus from 1941 to 1949. It's turning onto the right of way next to Eustis Street in 1946 with the freight interchange in the left foreground.

Bottom right: A plow has just cleared the Minneapolis campus loop. Ed Nelson photo.



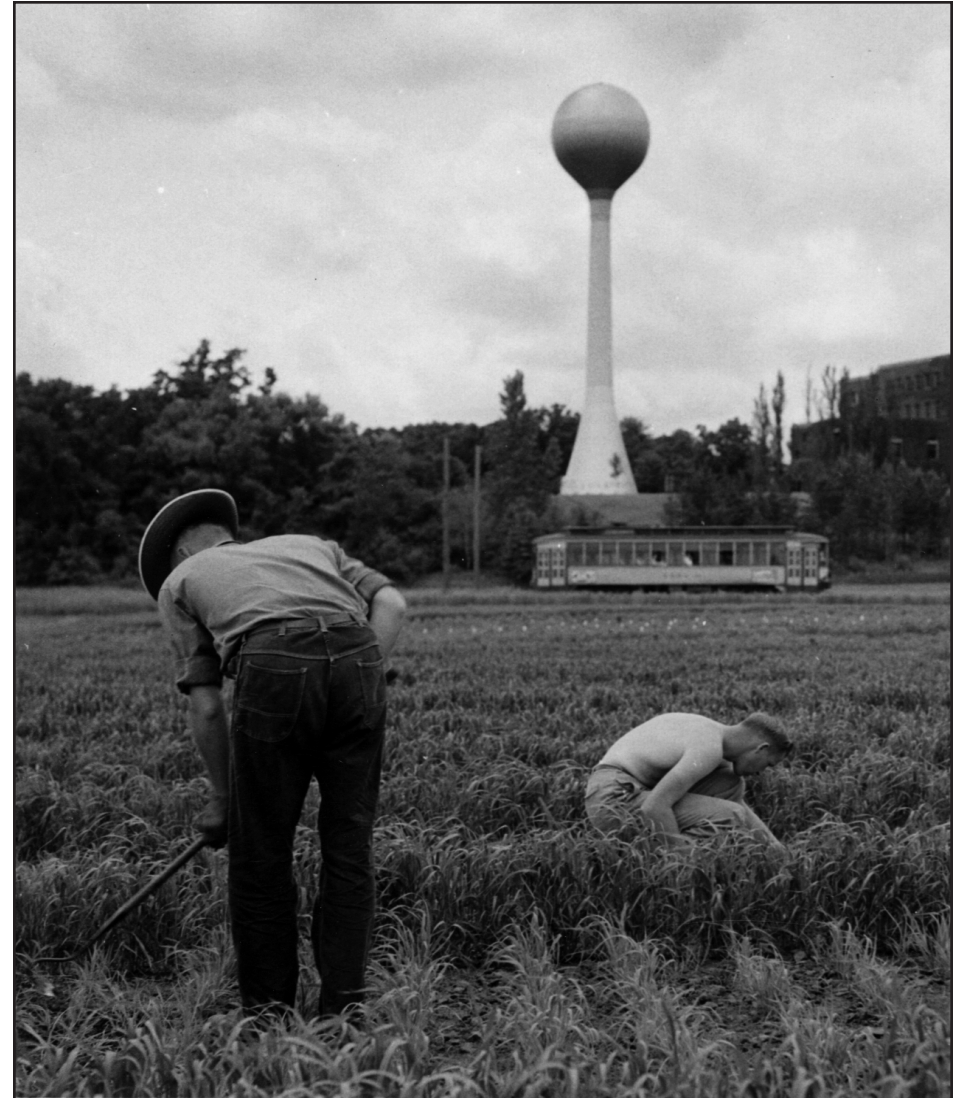


Top left: Sometime in the 1940s car 1348 takes the curve of Como Avenue just west of Eustis Street.

Top right: The switch car on the freight interchange. There were two tracks, allowing it to run around the freight cars. Norm Podas photo.

Bottom right: This is the end. On June 19, 1954, the day after regular service ended, the Minnesota Railfans Association chartered cars 1775 and 1300 for one last trip over the remaining trackage, including the Minneapolis campus loop. Bob Schumacher photo.





Top left: A car descends the ravine between Coffman Street and the University Grove stop.

Bottom left: Crossing Coffman Street, with the Cleveland Avenue underpass in the distance. Robert Gibson photo.

Above: Passing workers in the research plots on the northeast side of the campus. University of Minnesota Archives.

Top right: The Cleveland Avenue stop, just east of the Cleveland underpass.



Bottom right: The line skirted the north and east sides of the campus, along the edge of the test fields. The switch in the foreground led to the siding where freight cars could be off-loaded.





Car 1302 enters the St. Paul campus loop with the livestock barns in the background.

The switch car, painted U of M maroon and gold, spent most of its time sitting on the spur track that extended beyond the St. Paul campus loop to the power plant. Bill Olsen photo.





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